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Railway Plants in the Central-South

Name	Location
The San Ch'iao Railway Plant	Honan
The Kaifeng Railway Plant	Honan
The Chiang-an Railway Plant	Wuhan
The Wuchang Railway Plant	Wuhan
The Chu-chou Railway Plant	Hunan
The Heng-yang Railway Plant	Hunan
The Liu-chou Railway Plant	Kwangsi

The Chu-chou and Chiang-an plants are best equipped. According to the general regulation for repairing locomotives and cars, a locomotive is completely overhauled after a run of 300,000 kilometers, and ordinary repairs are undertaken every 100,000 kilometers. Passenger cars are overhauled some time between their sixth and their eighteenth year of service, depending upon the durability of each type of car; for repairs, the service period is halved. The overhaul of freight cars is made on the average of every six to eight years; for repairs, every three to four years.[20]

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Communist China manages her railways almost entirely according to the so-called "advanced experience" of Soviet Russia. The "new measures" are simply the experienced advice of the Soviet consultants. The most important measures adopted by the Central-South railways are mentioned below.

A. The "Economic Calculation System"

The stock of supplies in each of the railway administration's warehouses is checked in order to

20. The Chinese Communist Problems, Series No. I, 1954, p. 76.

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to determine the amount of working capital needed. The cost of material resources and manpower participating directly in the railway service is fixed; the amount of work required for a particular job is carefully calculated to determine whether each worker has enough to do to keep him busy eight hours a day.[21] The conservation of materials is another important procedure in this sytem, and includes the care to make economical use of fuel and other railway materials. Concerning coal consumption the Chinese Communists adopt Soviet Russia's "one-two-three" method. That is, for every kilometer a locomotive runs, coal is added twice, each time three shovelfuls. Anti-rust preservative is used in the boiler in order to "soften the water, dissolve the dirt, and prevent rust."[22] The quota system is intended to help prevent excess use of other materials. But in actual practice, this problem has not been solved. For instance, the total amount of materials needed for any job will depend upon a number of factors which may vary, and so a quota of materials cannot be arbitrarily fixed.

B. The Full-Car-Load Movement

Because of shortage of locomotives and rolling stock, the Communist government is enforcing the

21. Jen-min Jih-pao [People's Daily] , Peking, Dec. 16, 1952.

22. This method is, in fact out of date in the Western nations. In the west, a kind of super-heater has been adopted. A saving of about 15 per cent coal resulted. Experiments with 8-wheeled freight locomotives also resulted in savings of 25 per cent coal. See Chao Yung-seen, Railways in Communist China, Hong Kong, Union Research Institute, 1955, pp. 51-52.

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"full-car-load" movement in all regions. The so-called "Yang Mao-lin loading method"[23] is the model. The essential points of Yang's method are to devise a loading plan by dividing the cargo into different classes according to the shape and nature of the contents, and by pinning small markers on the packages. Workers are supplied with lists showing the loading order, and they load the marked packages into the freight cars which bear the same marked flag as seen on the packages. This is also called the "matching-flag loading method."[24]

C. The Overhaulage Movement

The "overhaulage system" was devised by Cheng Hsi-k'un, an engine-driver who had practiced the method as early as 1949. His locomotive was able to haul 60 tons more than its official haulage capacity. When an overloaded train approached an upgrade, Cheng accelerated and sprayed sand on the rails. To stop an over-loaded train, he had to slow down long beforehand and twice apply the brakes.[25] Cheng's method received so much popular acclaim that it was adopted in order to carry more war materials to North Korea.

At the beginning of the present regime, the Communists encouraged locomotive engineers to make use of their rolling stock to such an extent that each loaded train covered at least 500 kilometers

23. Yang Mao-lin was originally a head weigher in Harbin Railway Station.

24. People's Daily, Peking, May 27, 1952.

25. Chieh-fang Jih-pao [Liberation Daily], Shanghai, July 5, 1952.

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every 24 hours. In order to achieve this objective, it was necessary to increase the speed of the locomotive, to shorten the time lost in car-switching, checking and assembling at stations, and loading and unloading at terminals, and to increase the speed of other train operations between stations. The so-called "Li Hsi-kuei Train Switching Method" and the "Sun Feng-chi Simultaneous Checking and Repairing Method" were established on all national railways.[26]

A considerable increase of train speed and efficiency has been demonstrated by many railways; for instance, the through-passenger express from Peking to Hankow shortened its running time by 3 hours and 35 minutes, while the running time of the express train from Shanghai to Canton was reduced by 3 hours and 17 minutes.[27]

D. Planned Transport

The basic principle of "planned transport" is to make use of all available railway facilities to transport cargoes and to reduce empty hauls to the minimum level. The promulgation in 1953 of the "Tentative Regulations Concerning the Regional Balancing of Production and Marketing of Coal and Its Reasonable Transport" incorporates this measure.[28] The country is divided into thirteen coal-producing areas, comprising forty-five state-operated and joint state-and-private coal mines.

26. Kung-jen Jih-pao [Workers' Daily] , Peking, Dec. 19, 1952.

27. Ch'i Yü, Hsin Chung-kuo Ti T'ieh-tao Chien-she [New China's Railway Reconstruction] , Peking, 1953, p. 241.

28. Tsu-kuo Chou-k'an [China Weekly] , Hong Kong, Jan. 10, 1955, pp. 24-25.

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The distribution, supply sale, and transport of coal by these mines are completely under government control. The direction of flow and the regions in which coal is to be marketed are fixed for each individual mine in order to avoid the waste of transportation facilities.[29]

The Chinese Communists re-classified freight into thirty classes instead of the five which were used during pre-Communist days. Except for a few luxury items, the general level of freight rates applied on all the railways in Central-South China is said to be lower than that of the Nationalist Government. The rate for first-class commodities is about sixteen times higher than that of the thirtieth class. The rates decrease as the distances increase. The lowest freight rates are charged for grains and other food stuffs. Special rates charged for coal are even lower than the cost of operation.[30] The enforcement of the "responsibility system" began in January 1953, but because of the irresponsibility of railway staffs there was much loss in transit, and further damages resulted from train accidents and other causes, for which the rail administrations had to pay a great amount of compensation.[31]

IV. HIGHWAY ROUTES OF CENTRAL-SOUTH CHINA

The exact mileage of the network of highways in the Central-South Region is difficult to determine. The amount given in provincial reports does not agree with the amount given in national reports. There is no distinction made between provincial roads and county roads, nor is there any consistency

29. Ibid., p. 25.

30. New China's Railroad Reconstruction, pp. 32-33.

31. The Chinese Communist Problems, Ser. #1, Hong Kong, 1954, p. 77.